

CITY COUNCIL BUDGET HEARING

City Council Chambers  
Wednesday, December 2, 1970

Mayor Johnston reconvened the meeting of the budget hearings for 1971.

Present on roll call 9: Corsi, Egan, Finnigan, Herrmann, Jarstad, Maule, Moss, Schroeder and Mayor Johnston. Absent 0.

Mayor Johnston explained this is the second hearing on the budget for 1971. He asked if there was anyone in the Council chambers who wished to speak at this time.

Mr. John Willis, chairman of the Joint Labor Committee, explained that he is present regarding the Pierce County Medical Plan. He explained that most of the council members were not in attendance at the executive session during this discussion, but he said he is back again to appeal to the Council to reverse its decision in reference to the 43 cents to be taken for the increase in Pierce County medical so that the bed rate will be reduced to \$50, of which \$6.00 will be picked up by the employees. This will be on the employee's plan only. He said the business agents and the City employees have requested that the family plan be carried as it has in the past, and the employee will pay the \$2.74 to maintain coverage for the spouse and the additional cost for the children. If this request is denied it will throw the plan out of balance, he added.

Mr. Willis said the plan had been put into effect for non-uniform employees on full medical coverage since 1955, and has been in effect for 15 years.

The bed rate proposed starting January 1, 1971 would be as follows:

Tacoma General Hospital	\$56	Allenmore Hospital	\$55
St. Joseph's Hospital	54	Doctor's Hospital	56
Good Samaritan, Puyallup	53	Mary Bridge	55
Lakewood General	54	Puget Sound Hospital	54

He added since meeting with the City Manager a few nights ago it was decided this would not exceed \$5,300 per year, excluding fire, police and general government employees. This would be including major medical; in other words bringing it from the 43c figure to 50c. This is an additional benefit that was granted over what was requested last year. The one for major medical for nursing home care could have been \$14.00 if it had been in the general contract, but they had agreed to put it under the major medical plan. Thereby the employee would pay 20% of the nursing home care and the contract would pay 80%.

Pierce County has accepted a contract for their employees comparable with that of the City if the additional 50c increase, with a major medical and the nursing home care coverage is not denied. The Labor Committee felt it would be desirable to have the City and the County services parallel. The four-bed ward rate has been put as high as it can be anticipated for 1971, and the City would fall behind the County employees on the employee plan next year if they go along with the agreement recommended by the management team, he explained.

Mr. Finnigan asked if the 50c would be in addition to the \$1.67, for a total of \$2.10, for the same coverage this year, plus the nursing home care.

Mr. Willis explained it would be 50c plus \$1.60 as they have already been granted the 7c increase.

Mr. Finnigan said this would then give a limit of \$56 for bed care in the hospital.

Mr. Willis said this would be true if the Health and Welfare Committee, the Management Committee, and Labor got together and decided on a fixed bed rate of \$56.

or if the contract should be left open as in the past. This would be up to the Council to determine. The cost would be the same, or \$2.10 per employee. The policemen and firemen are covered, but theirs is a mandatory plan.

Mr. Finnigan asked how many employees would be included.

Mr. Willis advised that according to the budget, there would be 879 persons. This is not a large-cost item, but a very important one to City employees.

Mr. Moss asked what the annual cost would be.

Mr. Willis replied that the annual premium would be approximately \$5,300, excluding the Utilities Dept. employees, and raising the bed rate or leaving the contract open and leaving the coverage in its existing state.

Mr. Finnigan felt it would not be right to reduce the coverage at this time and that it would be a step in the wrong direction as far as the general city government is concerned. He feels it would be only right to pay the \$2.10 extra; which would be a 15% increase in the coverage over last year and would give the same coverage plus the 100 days of nursing home care. He said he knows how important health care is and the medical plan is one fringe benefit the City can provide. He said he strongly favors keeping it at the same level it has been, even at the additional expense for 100 days of nursing home care.

Mrs. Egan said when the matter had been discussed the other night the management team had talked about the employees paying part of the cost of the plan, but it had been delayed from year to year; and perhaps this is the time this practice should be started. She felt there is some merit in that argument.

Mr. Willis said he thought one way to start such a plan would be to fix the bed rate at \$56 per day and then next year that would be a negotiable item inasmuch as the rate will undoubtedly increase next year. He said he would prefer not to have this happen this year as all the unions had already conformed with the cost of living raise, and that it would mean another cost of living increase in their medical plan. Such an arrangement would actually constitute the same as a pay raise and be the next thing in priorities for employees; however, he said he felt this would be a poor year to start this.

Mr. Schroeder asked if all other City employees were fully covered at this time, and what the effect would be on the other employees if the additional amount were granted for the specific group in question.

Mr. Willis explained that the fire and policemen are already covered under state law, and the Pension Board could either have these employees pay their own medical bills or carry the insurance themselves. They have found that it is cheaper to be under some medical plan, however, and that is what they have elected to do. He explained that all the non-uniform employees are covered by the City.

Mr. Schroeder asked if the City's dealings with the other groups would be affected in any way, if the City were to grant the additional 50¢ premium. He was advised by a member of the management team that the other groups would not be affected.

Mr. Marshall McCormick, Acting City Manager, commented he could not see where that would affect the wages and compensation as the insurance is a fringe benefit which is over and above the hourly wages, and this compares to sick leave, or vacation or holiday pay. He felt if the Council grants the added premium and coverage it should be on the basis there is a \$56 maximum rate. This is a negotiable item which is subject to negotiation next year and from then on, as there will be increases in hospital rates. It should not be on the basis that it is not negotiable because in the past it has been paid by the City. He thought the Council should agree on this understanding.

Mr. Schroeder asked what action the Council should take to include the \$5,300 in the budget.

Mr. McCormick advised that after the management team had been consulted, the Council should approve it by a motion, and Mr. Gaisford, the Finance Director, would automatically put that amount into the budget.

Mayor Johnston asked if the correct figure was \$5,300.

Mr. Gaisford advised he had not personally worked it out, but he had been advised the correct figure was \$5,274.

Mr. Corsi said he had heard a figure of \$9,982.60, and in addition he had a \$20,000 total in his notes, and asked that this be clarified.

Mr. Willis advised that the \$9,982.60 would include the Utilities Department.

Mr. C. A. Erdahl, Director of Utilities, commented that someone had mentioned 500 employees for the Utilities Dept., but said there are approximately 900 employees in the Utilities Building, and if you include the other utilities sections, the transit department etc., the figure would be more like 1800 employees, not 500. He said he did not think, however, that this was the main point to consider; he felt it was not a question of how much the cost is, or if it is fair. He agrees that everyone should be covered.

Mr. Erdahl felt the unions and the employees were "nitpicking" the management team, and that if they participated, they would be taken advantage of as a management team. He said the team had already been advised by some of the unions that the 5% offer would not be accepted. But, he said, this is part of the cost of doing business as a City, whether the benefits are fringe benefits or take-home pay.

Mr. McCormick asked that the balance of the discussion be summarized in detail, for the record.

Mr. Erdahl said: The Council should listen to the union and take it under consideration and then make the decision; if you make a decision at this time tonight, you partially disarm the management team by obtaining a "yes" or "no" answer. I would like to give them the \$5.10 because I am an employee too and I am getting older than some of these fellows, but we have been given the responsibility and are trying to make a recommendation to the Council based on the prevailing wages and working conditions. I hate to be put in a position of saying that I don't want to have people covered, and their families, for all the sick leave too, because I do. We were given the job of getting a comparison; and as I told you before, Tacoma is high in fringe benefits. We started this proposal with Jack Willis's labor group by saying we would give \$1.05 on the deal and have them tell us how to apply it. They could have applied it in other fringe benefit spots and had the full \$56, but they didn't come back with a proposal. So we then said, "How about this for a proposal?" So they grabbed it and said, "We are being cut back." The city is not being cut back. They are getting \$1.60 more than they got before. That's not being cut back. If you use that same argument when we give them the cost of living increase, they are not going to get a nickel more next year than they are getting this year, after they pay for the cost of living.

He continued: I don't like to be put in these traps, and that's what it is. I hope the Council doesn't make the decision tonight. Take it under advisement, and let's find out whether we got a complete package. If we did, let's deal with labor. But let's not let them pick us to pieces, one by one; and that's what they are doing tonight.

Mr. Finnigan said: It is my understanding, Mr. Erdahl, that to get the same coverage plus the nursing home care would cost \$2.10 more this year than last for employees. So what you are saying is that you are offering \$1.05 and they can put it anywhere they want. I am selecting the priorities as far as I am concerned, and if they have not proposed where they want it, I feel this is one of the most important fringe benefits they can have, as I stated earlier. I feel that to provide the same amount of coverage as you had last year-- if it does cost \$2.10 more this year, then I feel

this is the place it should go. I might argue about some of the other fringe benefits just as strongly, but I feel to provide the same amount of health care, if it costs \$2.10 more this year than last, this is the way I would like to do it. I understand what you are saying before reaching a conclusion, and I am trying to show a little faith in labor. I have very little some times, but I feel this is the way it should be as far as the allocation of the extra money for fringe benefits on which I put the highest priority.

Mr. Erdahl said: I have a lot of faith in labor and all of these business agents and friends, and others we have been dealing with, but I don't know how to deal with friends on that basis. I don't know how to give money to friends and take it away from my enemies. But, Mr. Finnigan, we can't get carried away with this business under the terms of the resolution we are operating under, on how the employees spend their money. Some of the employees get a raise and go to the beer parlor and spend it, and some put it in the church, and some do other things. This is the cost of providing fringe benefits and take-home pay to the employee.

Mr. Erdahl continued: Now it costs the same dollars to the City whether they put it in fringe benefits or take-home pay, and what we have been trying to do for several years is to get them to decide that we are going to have some sort of a deductible program because we felt the City and the employees together are paying too much for the kind of protection we are getting, or we felt that way. And we have had no response for them. Jack indicates we will do it next year, and that's fine. I think he is very sincere and I think they all are. But when we total up the fringe benefits we are actually in a position under the resolution, in some cases to jack up the take-home pay, to keep these things on an even balance. And we are, with the fringe benefits included.

He continued: That's the job the Council gave us to do, and we are trying to follow the orders of the Council and the resolution. I don't think it is fair for us, as the management team, to be put in a position to say that we are cold-hearted because we are not going to protect the health and welfare of the people. That isn't the job the Council gave us; you gave us a job to say, "We will give you prevailing wages and working conditions." And I honestly believe that is what we have done. I think it is fair to the employees and to the City. When we met before, some Council members thought we might have gone a little too far in some cases; I think we have already gone as far as we can under the terms of the resolution. If you want to change the resolution and give us a new set of rules to work by, I think that is fine. But whatever you do, please don't decide this tonight because we have already been informed that somebody is going to ask for mediation. We better mediate the whole package, not part of the package.

Dr. Herrmann said: I wasn't making a pitch for increasing the fringe, or adding to this; I was merely trying to point out what the problem would be when you turn the calendar to January 1. I agree wholeheartedly with what Mr. Erdahl said: that the management team in their negotiations, by virtue of the resolution, has dealt with the unions in good faith, and this happens to be a problem I don't know how you can resolve. Mr. Benedetti mentioned last evening there has been some talk about an employee participation in the health care benefits program. Exactly what form this should take I don't know, or whether this is the year to take it. I do think if the Council were to make a sudden determination about this, it really wouldn't be fair to the management team who has been acting on our behalf in these labor negotiations, and we say, before a motion comes, "Let's spend \$5,000 or \$6,000."

I would recommend that we meet in executive session to discuss this for whatever time it takes to get this focused in.

Mayor Johnston said: Your point is well made, Dr. Herrmann, because there seems to be some discrepancy in the number of people being covered and the amounts involved.

Mr. Willis said: What I took is the General Fund employees, excluding the fire and police, and my figures were within five or ten people. We went to these people and bargained with them, but all the fringe benefits requested were denied by the management team because of the way the economy is at this time. We want to maintain at least the level we got during 1970. It is not our fault that the bed rates went up \$6.00 or the physician fees raised. As far as the collusion or dividing the Council is concerned, if the Joint Labor Committee has done that, we want to apologize. We are here because you, the legislative body, has the last say on these issues. What we are asking for is to just maintain a level and hold the line. We are also asking to get the cost of living raise we agreed to.

He continued: One union, with the bulk of their employees in the Utilities Dept., has filed for mediation; I don't know on what grounds. However, the rest of the unions haven't told me whether they are filing for mediation; apparently they have accepted the 5%. But if they have notified the manager or the Utilities Director to the contrary, then I don't know about it. But when you make up your minds, whether it is tonight or tomorrow, I want you to remember to think about the issues and not to talk about whether you are violating the rules or stepping on somebody's toes.

Mr. Finnigan said: May I ask Mr. Erdahl how many unions said they are going to file for mediation.

Mr. Erdahl said: We have been advised by one; and we have been advised by others that the proposal was not acceptable. But what I am saying is that if you give in on one side you are giving away part of our bargaining power. He didn't discuss this, and I would like to have him bring out his figures. We have the figures and the comparisons, and we are high by some dollars. Sometimes I wonder how we got that far, because I have thought just like you did, that the best thing for good, solid employees was to keep them and their families either healthy or see that they were not burdened with expensive hospital and doctor bills. I guess I was partly responsible, along with some others, in seeing that the percentage is high or that the fringe benefits cost to the City is high.

He continued: Some of you kind of cross-examined us on the prevailing wage on some of our comparisons for the take-home pay, and we thought you had cross-examined us the other night on the fringe benefits. If you want to do this, and Mr. Willis wants to be cross-examined on the fringe benefits, we are prepared. That is the resolution; the management team doesn't have any right to go out and negotiate the wages and working conditions and completely disregard the rule laid down by the Council. I might say the reason I am concerned about it is we have talked about rate increases, and we are going to be talking to the Council very shortly, and I

want to be sure there is an understanding when we go to the general public about rate increases, that we have considered the rate payers as well as the employees. I think the employees are being treated fairly.

Mayor Johnston said: I think when we take a recess we could spend part of the time for an executive discussion on this matter. Is that agreeable?

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Mayor Johnston called on Dr. Ratcliffe, Director of Mental Health for Pierce County, to speak.

Dr. Ratcliffe said: I have with me Mr. Robert Ness, Director of the Crisis Program here in Tacoma, and Mr. Robert Beal, Chairman of the Mental Health Center Board, who will make this presentation.

Mr. Robert Beal said: I am presently the president of the Board of Directors of the Comprehensive Center. We have presented to the Council a request for \$25,000 for one part of the program the Center has been carrying on, and I would like to outline what the Center is asking the City to participate in and to explain the reasons why the City has a direct, economic interest in his program. Dr. Ratcliffe is the director of the Center and Bob Ness is the person in charge of the emergency and crisis services. The department operates a rather broad-scale program in the City, covering mental health services from one-call crisis intervention type to complete hospitalization types. The funding is received from federal, county and some UGN funds, and has a large number of volunteers. In the proposal they have submitted to the Council some detail has been shown whereby 40 people spend time answering the phone calls from people making crisis calls. 175 people volunteer their time, gasoline and food which they purchase themselves. Approximately 30 citizens who serve on the Board are volunteers and all are interested in giving help in a critical area.

He continued: Their basic operation is by telephone and the number is listed on the inside of the telephone book as Crisis Clinic, 24 hour service. Anyone who finds himself in distress or cannot find a place to stay could call and receive help at any time. The City has a direct, monetary and economic involvement. The phone has been in operation for about 4½ years, so it is not new but they have had experience in this field. There are volunteers to take the calls, thereby relieving a load from the police department in a field where they are not capable of dealing with the details in some respects. The program also saves the time, not tying up the switchboards, and the City employees' time; thus allowing the police department to use its people for jobs they have been trained in and saving money because of the effectiveness of what is being done by their program.

Mayor Johnston asked to what extent the program's funds were received from the federal and state funds.

Mr. Beal said: Much of the funding is directly allocated to a specific program as they also have other types of programs, which include group therapy, individual therapy, partial hospitalization, and a full hospitalization program.

Dr. Ratcliffe explained: During the current year the federal staffing grant was \$88,190, which is used for defraying some personnel staffing costs, and only about half of that is available to the non-hospital program. \$94,300 is received from the state, of which only about \$43,000 is available to the non-hospital crisis program. The balance of the moneys are used basically to subsidize programming that occurs at St. Joseph's Hospital and not available for community programming. Because of budgetary problems at all levels there are ceilings on all of those funds, and their ability to expand from those sources is nil, and this makes their need more pressing.

Mr. Moss asked about funds from the UGN.

Mr. Beal advised the program had received \$32,000 from UGN in the current year, but more has been requested for the coming year. The UGN contribution would cover the entire non-hospitalization program and it has been tied in to the one aspect which is most directly related to the City and one where they are receiving a tremendous increase in demand for services even though they have a very limited availability of help. They have on their staff an MA degree person at an initial hiring salary of \$11,200, but he is now working at less than half that salary as the job was so heavy it required getting an additional man to help. What has been requested from the City is to raise that person's salary to \$8,500. This is only one commitment of sacrifice which has been made in order to keep the program in effect.

He continued: What they are specifically trying to do is to provide physical facilities for telephone answering service and the personnel to train those who answer the phones. This is a type of thing neither the City nor the County is doing now. There is no precedent whereby the money could be assigned to the Health Department budget and then be given to the Crisis Program. There has been some debate with the County Administrative Board, which has some jurisdiction over how much money goes to the County Health Dept. as against the Mental Health Clinic Agency. In terms of the pre-existing structure, he did not think it would work out very well.

Dr. Ratcliffe said the appropriations in the Health Dept. allocated to Mental Health are specifically for the Child Guidance Clinic and some alcoholic treatment funds they receive from the state. If there were any duplication of effort, or if the capabilities and programming were available in the Health Department, his group would have negotiated and worked out an arrangement; but it is not, in any sense, a duplication of Health Department activity.

Dr. Herrmann said: This would fit well into the mental hygiene aspect of the Health Department's total budget. Instead of coming to the Council with a separate request for this type of service, their budget might be considered part of the Health Dept. since their services transcend the political boundaries of the City of Tacoma. Page 141 of the City Budget indicates the purpose of the Health & Welfare Dept. staff is to provide evaluation, treatment and short-term counseling services for emotionally disturbed persons. Any appropriation being requested by the Crisis Program would fit into that being made by the Health Department.

Mr. Beal asked that Dr. Herrmann clarify if he meant that the County Health Dept. should include in its request to the City a certain amount, and if the City granted

the money it would be then paid over to the Mental Crisis Agency, rather than having the Crisis agency come to the Council for funds.

Dr. Herrmann said: It does not seem appropriate to discuss a particular phase of mental hygiene and eliminate it from the total budget of the Health Dept. and then have the Clinic come as a separate entity; it should be included in the total County-City Health budget.

Mr. Schroeder said: One thing the City would never be able to get from any governmental agency was volunteer help. Dr. Ratcliffe had budgeted the amount of money that would have been required to hire help and it had amounted to over \$300,000. He had not been able to find anyone who would be willing to volunteer as much as 8 hours a day for any government agency. When a project is taken from a private sector and put into the public sector the enthusiasm from the private citizen is lost. This is tremendously important and I am strongly in favor of the request being made. They are doing a tremendous amount of good work on a small amount of funds.

Mr. Corsi said: Dr. Ratcliffe has more knowledge about the program than I, and I am probably not in opposition, but I would like to have some time to study the matter.

Mr. Beal said: A data sheet had been prepared, which he assumed the Council had seen, which shows the \$25,000 being requested and broken down into salaries for three staff persons: \$8,500 for an Outreach Services Director, \$7,000 for an assistant, and \$5,300 for a coordinator. The balance would include \$1,800 for maintenance and operation and \$1,000 for telephone equipment.

Mr. Beal presented a map showing information regarding the program, including locations where emergency food has been supplied. These were mostly in the low-income sections of Tacoma, and since the economic crisis has been more acute, the emergency services for food, transportation and temporary shelter have all been furnished solely by volunteers without much professional staff backing. The staff had been added later. Since the Boeing layoff and the other economic conditions have been worse, the demands for the Clinic's services has gone up considerably. There were 212 requests for service last month. Presently they are establishing emergency food resources to meet the anticipated needs, and those will all be donated.

He continued: During the daytime hours, as the holiday season grows near, there is a rise in personal distress; therefore more calls are made to the Clinic. The night time calls show a slower rise, probably commensurate with the rise in population, and those who call at night tend to be very deeply distressed. We are concerned about maintaining a service that has been of help to nearly 100% of the cases.

Mr. Maule said: I feel the amounts from Federal, State and UGN, which amount to \$214,000, plus the \$25,000 being requested from the City, and making a total of \$239,000 is a lot of money for the program, especially in view of having a 150,000 population in Tacoma. This would be \$1.60 per capita. I would like to know more about where some of the money would be spent, especially with so much volunteer help in the program.



Mr. Beal explained: The program the City is being asked to assist in funding would be one of the least costly. Other programs being operated include out-patient psychotherapy, which is receiving approximately 70 new cases per month as compared to the national average of 45 cases per month. A partial hospitalization program at St. Joseph's Hospital sees 40 to 50 persons a month and gives them an intensive group therapy program, and they are returned home after several hours. There is also a hospital in-patient care program which provides emergency psychiatric in-patient care. The bulk of the dollar expenditures are spent on the professional psychotherapy kinds of services, and these are extremely costly in comparison to the Crisis Clinic treatment.

Mr. Maule asked if the treatments were by outside specialists.

Dr. Ratcliffe advised: The psychotherapy services include a combination of full-time staff in an out-patient clinic, plus consulting psychiatrists and some part time people who provide therapy services in the evenings. A large block of the funding goes to St. Joseph's Hospital to support staff positions in their psychiatric unit, which consisted of 38 personnel, toward whose salaries the mental health program contributes.; that ties up a significant amount of the operating expenditures. There is also a costly operation in the other portions of the program which has been running very close, financially, and any cuts at this point would mean cuts from other services.

Mr. Corsi referred to the summary the Council had received from the Dept. of Personnel relative to the Trainee Corps, and asked if Dr. Ratcliffe could present a summary of money coming into that operation in terms of what they are asking the City to do, and showing the sources of the money and what is being done with it.

Dr. Ratcliffe said a summary had been prepared several months ago while Mr. Corsi was a new Council member, and he would see that a copy is sent to Mr. Corsi.

Mr. Robert Ness, Director for the Crisis Clinic, said: \$20,000 of the comprehensive mental health center budget goes to the Crisis Clinic. This is used for the three full-time staff salaries. Part of it is also used for maintenance costs. He agreed that a summary would be necessary for viewing to make any determination on a request of this type,

Mayor Johnston said: he had received some material but it had been filed. He asked Police Chief Lyle Smith if he thought the police department had been relieved by the existence of the Crisis Clinic for 4½ years and taking the calls. He asked Chief Smith to give an appraisal of that aspect.

Chief Lyle Smith said: the police department's work has been rising so rapidly, they had not noticed any particular difference, but he had discussed the philosophy of their operation and agreed with it. He added that an application would be presented by the police department to the Council for a Law Enforcement Assistance Administration grant, whereby the police department would cooperate with the Mental Health Agency. He did not have the statistics to support a decrease in the workload of the police department and therefore could not say what it would have been without taking the crisis calls.

Mr. Schroeder said: He had served another UGN agency and appeared before a committee to justify the need for that agency. He had been recognized as a City Councilman and his name had been given to Dr. Ratcliffe, who had called him. He explained that is how he happens to have some information that the other members do not.

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Mayor Johnston said the Council would now hear from Mary Truitt, Executive Director of the Senior Centers, Inc. of Tacoma and Pierce County.

Miss Truitt said: She had come before the Council to appeal for assistance for the senior citizens in the whole of Pierce County. She presented a background description of the Senior Centers Program. She hopes that with the help of the Council and other organizations and businesses in the county, the senior citizens program will continue for many years. At the present time it is federally sponsored, having resulted from a survey four years ago which pointed out the lack of services for the senior citizens. It is now a part of the O.E.O. Program but it is hoped it will become a locally supported one.

She continued: The original center in Tacoma is now antiquated and is being condemned. The Senior Centers now number eleven and are located in various parts of the city. There are 1200 senior citizens a month to be housed, and statistics show that 7 out of 10 are single women who are required to live on a lower social security income. 75% in Pierce County are living on \$3,600 or less per year. The staff includes 22 persons, who are all senior citizens. A total of 6,100 citizens are participating in the program each month.

She said: the local news media have been very helpful in publicizing the senior program and this has been beneficial as many senior citizens do not have radios or televisions. Various means of enjoyment are strongly advocated and arranged for the senior citizens as it helps motivate them to join groups and not be isolated. Transportation service is provided for such things as grocery shopping and to take persons to or from any given situation, in addition to the scheduled meetings. The belief is that the more active the senior citizens are, the happier and healthier they will be, and therefore be a better member of the community. There are art classes as well as education classes which may be attended; these have been requested by the senior citizens themselves. Education classes are conducted by the Tacoma Community College, which allows 10 courses per year. In addition, each Center has a program within its own center.

Last year the Board of Trustees called a meeting of the representatives of various business organizations, councils and park systems that were involved in the original organization of the program, and as a result, various in-kind services have been provided. Also last year Congress had assigned funds for older persons' programs and advised there would no longer be financial assistance for such programs from the O.E.O. Therefore, there was not enough money allocated to assist all the necessary senior areas, and at the meetings of the various groups a decision was reached whereby each senior group would participate by supporting its own local Senior Center. A budget based on actual operational cost was prepared for each Center so that it could be presented to each assisting agency or outside group.

Miss Truitt continued: She is appearing tonight to request the Council's support for two of the Centers which are within the City. They had presented a budget to the Park Board for the Wright Park Center facility which had been furnished by the Park Board. This past year the Tacoma Housing Authority has been furnishing money for two of the programs, which are within the low-cost housing units, and they will continue and add a program within a third low-cost apartment house.

The largest Senior Center is at the Old Fire Station and has a budget of approximately \$23,000 per year; the East Side Center has a budget of \$12,000; the total for the two being \$35,115.

Mrs. Egan commented it would be difficult to coordinate the City budget with that of the Senior Center program inasmuch as the City's runs from January to January; whereas the Center's budget runs from March 1, 1971 through February 28, 1972.

Mr. Corsi asked what percentage of the City's 23,500 senior citizens over age 60 are participating in the Senior Center programs and asked what the comparison would be between their budgets for the 1970-71 fiscal year and the 1971-72 year.

Miss Truitt said the budgets would be the same for both years, and that the transportation and the maintenance personnel had been pro-rated among all the Centers in the City. There are 10% of all the senior citizens in the County participating in the program; no figures were available on participants just for the City programs. The figures were based on the 1960 census and the fact that there was a 14% increase in the senior population from 1960 to 1965, with a 20% increase in persons between age 60 and 65.

Mayor Johnston asked if the budget for the Old Fire Station Center would be the same, despite the fact that they plan to move to another location soon.

Miss Truitt replied it would be the same. There is a corporation now interested in buying a new facility for the Senior Citizens program to use, and they would be obligated to seek out other organizations to share the office space and to demonstrate that they can maintain the new facility. Or the Old Fire Station Center might possibly be combined with the Wright Park Center program, in one location.

Mr. McCormick advised: There is a long-standing dispute over the building which houses the Old Fire Station senior center. The Tacoma Youth Group had leased the building; however, the Senior Citizens are now occupying it, and the building is in very poor condition. In order to protect the City, he has written communications to both the Health Dept. and the Fire Dept., last October, requesting inspections to be made. He had advised Miss Truitt of this action by letter, but has not received any final replies yet. Study sessions are planned in order to decide on the dispute relative to the building. A settlement should be made as it might influence the determination by the Council on any funds they designate for the Senior Centers program. However, this controversy would not prohibit the Council from taking up the matter of funds for the Senior Centers, but the building does need extensive repair to bring it up to code before it can be used by anyone any longer.

Mr. Finnigan asked if the Tacoma Youth group had the authority to sublet the building.

Mr. McCormick advised the lease had expired and now both agencies are claiming possession. Each faction has an attorney and each has a lock to the building.

Mr. Finnigan commented that as matters stand, neither agency has the authority to occupy the building. It is being used for activities other than those designated, even though it has been condemned by the Health Department.

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A short recess was called 9:45 P.M. and the Council reconvened at 10:00 P. M.

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Mayor Johnston asked if there was any matter the Council would like to discuss at this point.

Mrs. Egan said she did not see any substantiating documents to show reasons for the budget increase requested by the Park Board as shown on page 334 of the budget.

Mr. Clar Gaisford, Finance Director, explained that in April 1970 an appropriation was granted the Park Board in the amount of \$25,000 as shown on page 335 because of raises made to other employees of the City. In June of 1970 there was also an appropriation of \$22,840 for the continuation of the summer program. Therefore, the actual appropriation for the park purposes for the year was \$911,840. The request for 1971 is \$963,812 which is 5.5%.

Mrs. Egan remarked the Park Dept. had not indicated what the increase would be used for this next year.

Mr. Gaisford said the Park Board should have presented the Council with the full budget.

Mayor Johnston asked that Mr. McCormick arrange for the members of the Park Board to be present at the December 3rd meeting so that the Council could ask questions.

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The Code Enforcement under the Public Works Dept. was taken up at this time.

Mrs. Egan said she would like to know what the duties are of the new Zoning Inspector and also who has been performing the duties heretofore in order to justify the establishing of this position. She also asked what changes would this make in the preliminary budget figures shown on page 147 of the budget.

Mr. Schuster, Public Works Director, explained the proposed budget included this position last year, but it had been deleted. He added the duties of the Zoning Inspector are: After the Planning Commission and the City Council approve the various zoning matters, it becomes the duty of the Public Works Dept. to see that the various stipulations are enforced. Also the added activity in this area has caused a heavier workload. He further stated the Board of Adjustment as well as the Planning Department have all requested such a position. Mr. Schuster further explained one building Inspector's position was deleted as one man had retired last year leaving four building Inspectors. Since building construction is less this year it is felt they could get by with only four Inspectors. However, a Zoning

Inspector is needed to accomplish the necessary jobs, but they will still have the same total number of personnel this year as next year.

Mayor Johnston referred to page XI of the budget wherein Account 42231 for Plan Check Fees which show that the 1971 estimate is considerably less than it had been in the last two years and asked if that was an indication there would be a sizable reduction in the volume of construction for the next year. However this was not reflected in the building permit account.

Mr. Schuster explained the Plan Check figure is primarily based on larger major structures to be checked. The number of building permits per se has not dropped off, compared to the dollar value of construction going on, but the community has been getting into more larger construction jobs, rather than smaller ones such as houses, etc.

Mr. Moss commented that a Zoning Inspector and code enforcement seemed to go together, but he had not found any request for increased code enforcement personnel. He asked if the Public Works Dept. was planning to use the Zoning Inspector to double for code enforcement also.

Mr. Schuster said last year the Council had transferred that function to the Health Department and cut out 13 employees leaving only three. However, this year the proposal is to place the jobs back in the Public Works Dept. as shown on page 168 of the budget. He said there is a definite need for this type of work to be done in Tacoma and was budgeted under the Public Works Dept.

Mr. Moss commented that the Model Cities area was going to be a sizable job of code enforcement and asked about other areas.

Mr. Schuster said the program was not designed for any particular area in Tacoma and when the Public Works Dept. previously had the responsibility, they had found that type of work necessary in all areas of Tacoma.

Mr. Jarstad said Mr. James Lively was present and had worked hard to get more people on this project.

Mr. James Lively, Housing Improvement Inspector, said it was his feeling more people were needed to accomplish the job, especially considering the volume of run-down houses, garages and many dangerous buildings, etc. He thought they might require about ten people for such work in 1971 and felt that more rigid enforcement of the nuisance ordinances is needed. He added he could keep three men and himself busy all the time and that would leave the responsibilities on dangerous buildings, minimum housing codes and service station ordinances without enough help in those areas. In the rental property the owners were usually not willing to bring them up to the minimum housing code and that is where four men are needed. He said it had been recommended that nine inspectors were needed for the City as approved by HUD, in order to have a workable program. If the Model Cities program is going to be using urban renewal funds in their second action year as has been publicized, there is more to be considered than can be discussed in so short a time.

Mr. Finnigan said he had noticed in the 1968 budget there had been 16 people in that category; in the 1969 budget there were 15 and that last year at least 10 were eliminated and the inspection work transferred to the Health Dept. He asked if the change between 1969 and 1970 to the other department had any effect on the City.

Mr. Schuster said he could not answer definitely, but he felt when 10 people were cut out of a program, it is cut down quite considerably. He said most of the work consisted of contacting people numerous times and that more buildings had been torn down through talking with people than through condemnation. A number of hearings had been held resulting in many buildings being demolished without going through the condemnation proceedings.

Mr. Finnigan asked if the program were not an environmental improvement program whereby fire hazards, health hazards, etc., were effected.

Mr. Schuster said this was true and also included removal of junk cars, partly burned houses, cleaning up undersirable areas and notifying people to clean up their yards; all of which added up to a considerable volume of work. He commented the manager's office had felt that a program such as this, with four people, would be acceptable to the Council.

Mr. Finnigan added the program had been very effective and it had created additional jobs that were needed when the improvements were made. He felt that four people are not enough for such a program. He added he would like to see a stronger effort made to step up the program where it was originally and possibly double the number to 8 or 9 employees.

Mr. Corsi said that he had understood federal funds were available for this program.

Mr. Schuster explained there had been federal funds available for a demolition program, but this is a different program. He said there is money available for certain types of enforcement programs, but none for the exact program in question. Last year when the 15 people were budgeted, there was an estimated expenditure of \$163,524. If there is to be a program which would require 8 or 9 people, the budget would have to be increased to allow for more clerical help and other items not budgeted under the 4-person operation, he added.

Mrs. Egan said she would like to have some statistics relative to the jobs that were performed by the four people during the time the program was under the Health Dept.

Mayor Johnston asked that Mr. McCormick obtain this information. He also asked if it were true that the City would have to certify a reasonable crew in this field and that any future federal programs for the City would not be available until there was a certified workable plan.

Mr. Buehler, Planning Director, said both his department and the City Manager's staff had worked on the program that was submitted.

Mr. McCormick advised that relative to the Housing Improvements as listed on page 168 of the budget, the cost of the 4 people would be \$49,636 and if 4 more people were added it would be approximately \$100,000 just for the inspectors. In addition to that, as Mr. Schuster pointed out, if more inspectors were employed, additional employees would be needed to carry out the results that arise from the inspections. This was taken into consideration. He said he did not imply that four was all the City could utilize, but said this budget is an austere one and other departments could also utilize additional personnel as well. However, he said he would obtain information from Dr. McNutt on the work that was done by the inspectors while they were under the Health Dept. There had been a federal grant of \$205,000 for demolition during that period, therefore, more inspectors were needed at that time. This function was in

the Health Dept. years ago, then transferred to the Public Works for many years until it was put back into the Health Dept. last year. However, with the consent of both departments, he had put it in the Public Works Dept.

Mr. McCormick further explained the Public Works Dept. is geared adequately to take care of the work that 4 inspectors could accomplish, although it may not be accomplished as rapidly. He agreed with Mr. Finnigan that more inspectors could be utilized, but said this will at least start a reasonable program and meetings can be held shortly to determine policy matters and duties. He said he had recommended the fourth inspector; it had been listed for three. He pointed out in addition to these there are the regular Fire Inspectors and Health Inspectors as well as Inspectors for new construction. He questioned the need for additional inspectors if there was no money to demolish the buildings or to provide the clerical help to support the work. He suggested that the City could add to the number as time progresses.

Mr. Corsi asked if the deficiencies now exist in sufficient number to justify using 8 or 9 people to uncover and correct the deficiencies. He said he did not want to suggest they were putting people into the department simply because they might find work for them to do.

Mr. McCormick said it would depend on how fast the Council wanted to correct and inspect these type of buildings in Tacoma. They do exist, but once they are designated, there has to be the help to process the hearings, etc and if there are appeals that would take additional personnel, as well as more people in other departments. He added this is a very difficult field and there is a need for administrative guidance on such a project.

Mr. Corsi said if the deficiencies exist, they cannot just be ignored.

Mr. McCormick said deficiencies exist in a number of other areas. All departments could use more help, but there is only a certain amount of funds and the budget has already been cut by several thousand dollars.

Mr. Finnigan said he had never seen a budget which was not austere, but if the need is there, the four inspectors would certainly be needed and by increasing the budget from three to four, he could see they would be attempting to stay within the means of the Public Works Dept. The same attitude had been taken in respect to every other department; however, if the added people would create more employment, it would do a service to the other departments by helping the Fire Department and Health Department by virtue of the work being done for the City. He felt if it was a good program, it would be worth getting into.

Mr. McCormick asked if Mr. Gaisford had anything to add.

Mr. Gaisford said the only point he would make in regard to the program on dangerous building demolition is that it is supported by federal funds and therefore not using City funds. He said if the City gets into a program of its own demolishing buildings, it would come under the General Fund and after demolition it would be placed as a tax lien. However, the City has not been too effective on recovering these as they are only a "second lien" and the City have often lost on this type. Some of the City's cases are in court at the present time, he added

Mrs. Egan asked if it were possible to take the two gardeners who are listed on page 176 of the budget and place them into a section where they could help with the code enforcement program in question. She also asked if the gardeners worked the year around.

Mr. Schuster said there is a trend whereby people are more interested in landscaping than before. He said there are approximately 70 places in Tacoma where the maintenance division does the landscaping and the two employees allowed are a minimum provision. He referred to the landscaping near the Narrows Bridge and the approaches to the Yakima Avenue Bridge, the new Sprague Ave. Interchange area, the sewage treatment plant, the pump stations and many other small areas in the City. He added in the winter they trim shrubbery and trees and still have to cut grass and work all the year around.

Mr. Fimmigan asked for an explanation of the increase in street cleaning.

Mr. Schuster advised that last year there had been a request to his Department to reduce its budget by approximately \$400,000. In order to accomplish that, they had to cut down on personnel in the street cleaning section. Later on the Council had authorized some additional money to put some of the street cleaning personnel back on the job. However, there was the period they were laid off which is not reflected in the 1970 budget, but would be reflected in the 1971 budget.

Mr. Lively replied to Mrs. Egan's earlier question as to the number of housing units being taken care of by the Housing Improvement section, stating there had been 1135 units renovated or demolished in a 15-month period. He said this was intended as a 10-year program to eliminate the sub-standard housing in Tacoma and to remove the old buildings so that new houses could be built. This program had been outlined by the City under federal auspices and is now in its fourth year. As to the Fire Inspectors work, the inspections that they made were pertinent to the Public Works Dept. and turned over to that Department on a memo so that the Code Inspectors checked out the situations and took the legal recourse necessary to eliminate the problems. This arrangement helped the Fire Department and Health Department but had necessitated enforcement by the Public Works Dept. During that time there had been a \$15,000 demolition fund and this was used in some cases to induce the owner to take care of his own problem, as the owner was allowed to perform his own work and receive the pay.

Mr. Corsi asked what would the possibilities be for reapplying for a grant.

Mayor Johnston said he would check on this point as it is a significant program.

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#### POLICE DEPARTMENT


Mayor Johnston referred to page 64 of the budget and asked why the number of personnel for the Police Department showed four fewer policemen than in 1970.



Chief Lyle Smith explained he had been faced with the problem of limiting his budget also and yet properly proportioning the personnel and as a result he had been forced to have a reduction in personnel. He advised as a result of some long-time traffic programs in the Department, there was some excellent help in the traffic engineer's office, therefore could reduce the personnel feasibly, at this time. If the budget is passed as has been recommended, the Police Department would have to watch its results closely as it is possible that additional personnel would have to be added later.

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Mr. Moss moved to recess the meeting until Thursday, December 3rd, at 7:30 P.M. Seconded by Mrs. Egan. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried. Meeting recessed at 11:30 P.M.

  
GORDON N. JOHNSTON - MAYOR

Attest:   
Josephine Meltor - City Clerk